

Chapter – III

Socio-Economic Overview of the Study Area

3.1 North-East India :

North Eastern region of India having its definite identity for its typical type of physical, cultural and socio-economic characteristics. The North-Eastern Region of India (NER) comprises of the eight states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura which cover an area of 2.62 lakh sq. km. and accounting for 7.9 percent of the country's total geographical area. (Mishra and Upadhyay, 2011) The seven sister states of North Eastern Region of India recently included the state of Sikkim as its eighth state. The region lie between 21.75° to 29.28° N latitude and 89.40° to 97.255°E longitude. Difficult terrain, wide variation in slopes and altitudes ranging between 75m to 5000m above sea level, high rainfall and humidity, low solar radiation and extreme temperature from low to high made the region unique in its character. Rich natural resources, flora, fauna, soil, water and minerals are the assets of the region. High rainfall zone in the world is also in this region in the state of Meghalaya in Cherrapunji (Mawsynram).

The altitudinal differences together with variations in topography are mainly responsible for sub-tropical to alpine type of climatic variations in NER. Here the major rainfall occur during the period of June – September which accounts for the 64% of annual rainfall and is the 12.7% of the total rainfall of the country. The climatic regions of the area is mainly of three types –the frontier hilly area having cold humid monsoon climate, wet sub-tropical monsoon climate and humid intermediate-thermal monsoon climate having high monsoon showers (Mishra and Satapathy,2003)

In NER area major soil patterns are – entisols, alfisols, ultisols and inceptisols. The soils of the sub-tropical plain and valley areas are developed on alluvium from the adjacent Himalayas by the rivers. Schist and granite type of original material formed the dark brown colour of Alpine zone soils.

About 46% of the total water resources of the country are in the share of the north-east India endowed by the nature. Excessive rainfall and heavy floods is an usual phenomenon of the region during monsoon which influences drainage congestion, soil erosion, land slide, mudslides, water-logging etc. The excess rainfall is responsible for soil erosion in steep slopes and siltation in river bed also. Insufficient rainfall during post monsoon and winter monsoon period hampers the productivity of rabi-crop.

3.1.1 Water Resources and Irrigation:-Brahmaputra and Barak - the two river basins enriched this region with enormous water resources. Major geographical area of this region is covered by this two river basins amounting to more than 85% approximately. Groundwater potential is also immense in this region. The two river systems contain most of the surface water of this region. Both the snow of Himalayan range and heavy precipitation are feeding these two important river systems and is the source of the sweet water in this region.

The hilly mountainous ecosystem and steep slopes constrained the water resources to be utilized for the irrigation. That is why mostly the agricultural activities in this region opt for rainfall system of irrigation with primitive tools of farming. The rivers, rivulets, beals, wells, ponds, hawar etc. are used for irrigation purposes where the water is fed by monsoon rain. As a result, introduction of new cropping system apart from mono-cropping system appears to be less possible. Whatever irrigation projects are there that is only streamlined for surface water utilization which is naturally rainfed . The coverage of irrigated area is almost stagnant for last few decades and during monsoon havoc is created by the monsoon rainfall. Development of new major or minor irrigation project in this region is not taken seriously by the policy planners and respective authorities.

North-East India possesses agrarian economy where the 70% population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. The major crop of the region is rice which constitutes 92% of the food grain production followed by maize and pulses. Being a tribal dominated society in NER, tribal method of cultivation like shifting or Jhum cultivation is in practice on community land as was in ancient times.

3.1.2 Land Tenural System :-Land tenural system in this region is having special features where land holding is of 3 types – land belonging to village headman, community land and individual's land.

3.1.3 Population :- Assamese, Bengali and Plain Tribes are dominating the plain regions of North East India. Hill tribes are the inhabitants of hilly region of NER. Population of the NER comprises heterogeneity in the elements of different races, castes, languages and cultures. This diverse entity crops up diverse social institutions and plays a significant and prominent role in the determination of different economic activities of the region. Different types of tribal population both in plain and hill have different languages and peculiar social systems. The eight states of NER of India forms a distinguishable group for its rich ethnic culture and prevalence of Tibeto-Burman language. South –East Asian culture have a high influence on this part of India.

Total population of the NER is 4,49,80,294 according to 2011 census.

3.1.4 Education:-Educational progress is the indicators of social change and economic development of a region which necessitates the development and formation of skills and efficiency amongst the population. Literacy rate in NER is 83.33 % in males and 74.125 % in females. Mizoram is having highest literacy rate in females 89.3% compared to all other states . Arunachal Pradesh shows the lowest female literacy rate of 57.7%.

North-east India has experienced an extraordinary female literary growth inspite of its poor infrastructure availability compared to all India level. It has also been observed that this growth performance is limited to few areas and in some areas it is not upto the level when compared to the literacy level and educational attainment of other parts of the country. This wide divergence is indicated in the workforce in different parts of the region.

3.2 Demographic & Socio-Economic Condition of Assam.

Most of the states in the NE region are comparatively smaller in size than Assam when the population and geographical area is taken into consideration. For the

purpose of policy prescription, the socio- economic features of Assam served the purpose of representation of other north eastern states in maximum cases to the government of the nation.

Assam is situated in the north-east region of India – bordering seven states, viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and West Bengal and two countries viz. Bangladesh and Bhutan. The geographical area of the state is 78,438 sq.Km. of which 98.4 percent area is rural. Assam shares about 2.4 percent of the country's total geographical area and provides shelter to 2.6 percent population of the country. Most of the state's population lives in the lush and verdant valleys of its two major river systems in the twenty four districts of the Brahmaputra valley and the three districts of the Barak Valley. The two hill districts – Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao, are less densely populated and separated the two valleys. For administrative and revenue purposes, the state has 27 districts including, Kamrup (metro) district and four districts under the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) areas viz Kokrajhar, Baska, Chirang and Udalguri.

According to the census of India, 2011, the population of Assam figures at 3,12,05,576 of which 1,59,39,443 are males and 1,52,66,133 are females. The decadal growth of the State's population works out to 18.92 percent during the decade 1991-2001 as against 21.54 percent for the country as a whole. During the decade 2001-2011 the growth rate is 17.1 percent compared to the country's 17.7 percent. In most of the decades during the last century the growth rate of population in Assam has always been well above the national growth rate. Large scale migration has victimized Assam and can be attributed from the difference. The most astonishing fact is that the migration to Assam is from neighboring countries and has been continuing in normal time. Naturally, the density of population of the state has gone up to 398 in 2011 census, which was 340 in 2001 census. In 2011 census, the density of population of India was 368 as against Assam's density of 398. This trend of high density of population in the state over the national density of population continues since 1971.

Table : 3.1**Population Trend in Assam and India**

Year	Population (in lakh)		Percentage Decadal variation		Density (Persons per sq. km)	
	Assam	India	Assam	India	Assam	India
1901	33	2384	-	-	42	77
1911	38	2521	17.0	5.8	49	82
1921	46	2513	20.5	0.3	59	81
1931	56	2789	19.9	11.0	71	90
1941	67	3186	20.4	14.2	85	103
1951	80	3611	19.9	13.3	102	117
1961	108	4392	35.0	21.5	138	142
1971	146	5481	35.0	24.8	186	177
1981	*180	6833	*23.4	24.7	*230	230
1991	224	8463	24.2	23.9	286	267
2001	266	10270	18.9	21.5	340	325
2011	312	12106	17.1	17.7	398	368

* Interpolated

Source : Census of India.

Thus on an average, 58 more people inhabit every square kilometer in the state as compared to a decade ago. The population density of India has gone up to 368 persons in 2011 census per square kilometer from 325 persons in 2001.

3.2.1 Population Characteristics

The provisional population of the country as a whole as per census 2011, stands at 1, 210, 193,422 out of which male and female population figured at 623,724,248

and 586,469,174 respectively. 2.57 percent population of the country is sheltered by Assam. At the district level, the highest growth rate is found in Dhubri (24.44) and highest density is found in Kamrup Metro(1313). The sex ratio i.e., number of females per 1000 males in the state shows an improvement from 935 in 2001 to 954 in 2011.

The percentage of population in the age group of 0-6 has declined to 14.47 in 2011 from 16.87 percent in 2001.

Table : 3.2
Population Characteristics of Assam

Particulars	Unit	2001 census	2011 census
Population	Lakh	267	312
Decadal Growth	Percent	18.92	17.1
Density	Per Sq. Km.	340	398
Sex – Ratio	Females per 1000 males	935	958
Literacy	Percent	63.25	72.19
a) Male	Percent	71.28	77.85
b) Female	Percent	54.61	66.27
Urban Population	Percent	12.90	14.09
a) Male	Percent	53.41	51.39
b) Female	Percent	46.58	48.61
Rural Population	Percent	87.10	85.90
a) Male	Percent	51.43	51.03
b) Female	Percent	48.57	48.97
S.C. Population	Percent	7.40	7.15
S.T. Population	Percent	12.83	12.45

Source : Economic Survey, Assam 2014-15

As per the population census, 2011 the population of state was 86.0 per sq. km. of the total population and was much higher than that for all India (69.0 percent). The proportion of rural population in the state decreased from 87 percent in 2001 to 86 percent in 2011. Out of the total rural population 51.03 percent were male and 48.97 were female. The population census, 2011, shows that around 14 percent of the total population of the state was living in urban areas. The percentage of urban population in the state has increased from 12.9 in 2001 to 14 in 2011.

The sex-ratio in the state shows an improvement for 935 in 2001 to 958 in 2011. The sex-ratio for all ages for rural area was calculated as 960 and for urban areas were 948.

Table : 3.3

Population of Children (0-6) years in India & Assam (2011 Census)

State / India	Total Population	Rural	Urban	Percentage of total population	Sex Ratio
Assam	4638130	4187323	450807	14.86	962
India	164478150	121285762	43192388	13.59	-

Population of children (0-6) years of age group according to 2011 census reveals that children of this age group in Assam is more rural area, 4187323 than in urban area, 450870. All India figure also shows that children in rural area is more (121285762) than in urban area (43192388). The percentage of total children of age (0-6) years is 14.85 and is more than the all India figure (13.59) which shows the greater, responsibility of the state for these children.

3.2.2 Number of Household : Total description of households in the district as well as in the state according to 2011 census are presented in the Table : 3.4. In Cachar total households are 379955 and 6406471 in the state. Total rural household in the district are 310750. The number of urban household (69205) is more than the rural. In case of the state also the rural-urban differential is visible. Size of the household is same for rural (4.6) and urban (4.6) area. In case of the state, the household size is less in urban area (4.5) than in rural area (4.9).

Table : 3.4

Number and Size of Household

Area	No of Household			Size of Household	
	Rural	Urban	Combined	Rural	Urban
Cachar	310750	69205	379955	4.6	4.6
Assam	5420877	985594	6406471	4.9	4.5

Source : Basic Statistics, NER, 2015

3.2.3 Birth & Death Rates in Assam :-

Table : 3.5

Birth and Death Rates in Assam (in Percentage)

Year	Birth Rate			Death Rate		
	Combined	Rural	Urban	Combined	Rural	Urban
2009	23.6	24.9	15.9	8.4	8.8	5.9
2010	23.2	24.4	15.8	8.2	8.6	5.8
2011	22.8	24.0	15.5	8.0	8.4	5.6
2012	22.5	23.7	15.6	7.9	8.3	5.6
2013	22.4	23.5	15.4	7.8	8.2	5.6

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15.

The economic survey report of Assam, 2014-15 shows the decrease in birth rate in a very marginal way from 2009 to 2013 in the state. The urban area in the state having birth rate comparatively lower than the rural area for these 5 years from 2009 to 2013. The death rate in Assam is also showing a marginal declining trend. Urban area shows a lower rate of death than the rural Assam.

3.2.4 Literacy in Assam:- The growth of literacy in Assam has shown an encouraging sign. The literacy rate for Assam as per census 2011, increased to 72.19 percent with 77.85 percent for males and 66.27 percent for females. The literacy rates for rural and urban areas were calculated at 69.34 percent and 88.47 percent respectively. The literacy rate for country as a whole, on the other hand, increased to 73 percent from 65 percent with male and female differentials of 80.89 percent and 64.64 percent respectively. The table 3.6 shows the progress of literacy rate in Assam and India for the last three decades.

Table : 3.6

Literacy Rate in Assam

State	Unit	1991			2001			2011		
		Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
Assam	%	52.89	61.87	43.03	63.25	71.28	54.61	72.19	77.85	66.27
India	%	52.21	64.13	39.28	64.83	75.26	53.67	72.99	80.89	64.64

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15.

The effective literacy rate as per census 2011 for Assam comes to 73.18 percent while it is 78.81 percent for males and 67.27 percent for females. The figure for the country's literacy rate stands at 74.04 percent as per 2011 population census.

The economy of the state in terms of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at factor cost is expected to grow at the rate of 7.4 percent in real terms (at 2004-05

prices) as per Advance Estimates of 2010-11 as against the growth rate of 8.1 percent estimated in the previous year.

3.2.5 State Income :- The state domestic product (SDP) and its related aggregates was the main components of planning and policy making as well as considered as important factors of development process of the State. The estimates of SDP reveal the extent and direction of changes in the levels of economic development of the state over a period of time. The fiscal reform measures adopted by the state of Assam started yielding favourable results since 2005-06 and have been recognized to be a key factor for attaining higher economic growth eventually leads to improvement to the well being of people.

Table : 3.7

Gross State Domestic Product at Factor Cost at Constant (2004-05) Prices

Sl. No	Sector	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
		At Current Price	At constant price	At Current Price	At constant price	At Current Price	At constant price	At Current Price	At Constant Price	At Current Price	At Constant Price
1	Primary Sector	3156812 (19.18)	2033268 (5.99)	3585135 (13.57)	2068209 (1.72)	3340596 (7.13)	2108700 (1.90)	4029945 (4.93)	2160301 (2.45)	4511780 (11.96)	2223366 (2.92)
2	Secondary Sector	1653345 (15.48)	1226839 (11.13)	2135184 (29.14)	1262927 (2.94)	2399902 (12.40)	1315328 (4.17)	2466523 (2.78)	1442833 (9.69)	2715621 (10.10)	1558112 (7.99)
3	Tertiary Sector	4787300 (18.88)	3719282 (10.01)	5548477 (15.90)	4154910 (11.71)	6349809 (14.44)	4260340 (6.18)	7343619 (15.65)	4476730 (5.08)	8718631 (18.72)	4904694 (9.56)
Total GSDP		9597457 (18.38)	6979389 (9.00)	11268796 (17.41)	7486046 (7.26)	1290307 (11.73)	7684368 (4.63)	1384008 (9.93)	8079864 (5.15)	15946032 (15.22)	8686172 (7.50)
Per Capita GSDP (Rs)		31952 (16.89)	23236 (7.63)	37053 (15.96)	24615 (5.93)	40890 (10.36)	24957 (3.35)	44406 (8.60)	25924 (3.87)	50558 (13.85)	27540 (6.23)

Source : Statistical Hand Book, Assam, 2014

3.2.6 Per Capita State Income : As per Quick Estimates for 2013-14, the per capita Income at constant (2004-05) prices is Rs. 23392.00 as against Rs. 22273.00 in 2012-13 and Rs. 21741.00 in 2011-12 showing a growth rate of 5.02 percent, 2.45 percent and 2.81 percent respectively. At current prices per capita income (PCI) is worked out at Rs. 44263.00 during 2013-14 as against Rs. 38945.00 in 2012-13 and Rs. 36320.00 in 2011-12 registering a growth of 13.66 percent 7.23 and 9.77 percent respectively. A comparative table in respect of PCI of the state and the country is given in Table 3.8

Table : 3.8

Per Capita Income of Assam and India (in Rupees)

Year	Per Capita Income			
	Assam		India	
	In Current Price	In Constant Price	In Current Price	In Constant Price
2010-11	33087	21146	54021	36342
2011-12	36320	21741	61855	38048
2012-13	38945 (P)	22273 (P)	67839 (P)	38856 (P)
2013-14	44263 (Q)	23392 (Q)	74380 (Q)	39904 (Q)
2014-15	49480 (A)	23968 (A)	NA	NA

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.2.7 Agriculture : The economy of Assam is largely rural and agrarian Agriculture. Agriculture is still the principal occupation of majority of the rural population in the state in terms of employment & livelihood. About 98.4 percent of total land mass (Census, 2011) of the state is rural. The net cultivated area of the state is 28.11 lakh hectares (2011-12) which is about 87.38 percent of the total land available for agricultural cultivation in the state. The contribution of agriculture sector towards state economy registered gradual fall [GSDP at constant (2004-05) prices] during the period 2005-06 to 2012-13 (provisional estimate).

The trend of growth of Agriculture sector, on the other hand, was erratic [GSDP at constant (2004-05) prices] during the same period.

Table : 3.9

Trend of Growth of Agricultural Sector

Year	Contribution to GSDP %	Annual Growth over the previous year (%)
2009-10	19.1	6.5
2010-11	18.8	3.4
2011-12	18.2	1.1
2012-13 (P)	17.5	1.8
2013-14 (Q)	17.9	4.3

Source : Economic Survey, Assam 2014-15

Despite endowed with diverse soil and climatic condition Assam was caught by nature especially unseasonal floods and dry spells, causing damage and spoiled the crop land. Insufficient irrigation support, occurrence of chronic flood and river bank erosion affected largely both the valley – Bhramaputra & Barak whereby there was an impact in the form of agricultural land loss, loss of crop and crop production in the state was shattered. The State Agriculture Department has given more emphasis on increase of food grain production by adopting double cropping schemes to provide food security and nutrition to the growing population. The department has given priority to the exploitation of available and untapped resources to enhance the production, productivity of the crops including the horticultural crops and income of the farming community by reaping the best technologies.

The department has formulated state as well as district specific plans depending on Agro-Climatic condition, growth potential and specific requirement of Districts and giving thrust on multi-cropping, improved farm mechanization and assured irrigation. Quality of certified HYV/Hybrid seeds use, popularizing integrated

Nutrient and pest management schemes, development of marketing infrastructure etc. are stressed to encourage farming community & to create maximum potential for income and employment generation.

3.2.8 Production : Table : 3.10 shows that total food grain production in the state was 54.02 lakh MT compared to 52.79 lakh MT in 2012-13. Total food production in the state was 2.33 percent more during the year 2013-14 compared to the previous year's production. The year 2013-14 was the year of highest food grain production in the state as is evident from the table 3.9. Total production of rice in the state has marginally increased in 2013-14 (51.93 lakh MT) than in 2012-13 (51.228 lakh MT). The production of total pulses reported 5.1 percent increase with 0.88 lakh MT in 2013-14 compared to 0.84 lakh MT in 2012-13. Compared to previous year's (2012-13) production the 2013-14 recorded rather slight decrease in oilseed production and is the result of deficient' rainfall as experienced by the state.

Table : 3.10

Trend of Production of Food grains in Assam

(Figure in '000 tonnes)

Year	Total Rice	Wheat	Total Pulses	Total Food grains	Total oilseeds (excl. coconut)
2009-10	4409	65	66	4557	147
2010-11	5033	56	72	5178	159
2011-12	4716	49	73	4857	156
2012-13	5128	44	84	5279	187
2013-14	5193	40	88	5402	186

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.2.9 Food Grain Requirement :- The food grain requirement during the twelfth five year plan period in the state has been estimated on the basis of growth of population (projected of 2001 Census).

Table : 3.11

Food Requirement During the Twelfth Five Year Plan period in Assam

Year	Projected population (in lakh)	Adult population (in lakh)	Food Requirement (in lakh MT)				Total food grains (in lakh MT)
			Rice	Wheat	Pulses	Oil seeds	
2012-13	316.97	253.58	41.65	5.55	2.78	3.70	50.91
2013-14	322.34	257.87	42.35	5.65	2.82	3.76	51.77
2014-15	327.79	262.23	43.07	5.74	2.87	3.83	52.64
2015-16	333.34	266.67	43.80	5.84	2.92	3.89	53.53
2016-17	338.40	270.72	44.46	5.92	2.96	3.95	54.35

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.3 Cachar:-

Historical Background: The study is conducted in Cachar district of Assam. Both the municipal area and the rural areas of the district were brought under the study. The district of Cachar owes its name to Kacharis who ruled over the district before its annexation to British. According to Gait, Hidimba or Hiramba was an old name of Cachar.

Cachar was the only district of Assam in the Barak Valley from the days of yore with Silchar, Karimganj and Hailakandi as its three Sub-divisions. The origin of the name 'Cachar' is believed to have been derived from the Sanskrit word 'Khachar' which means a broad region near mountain or water. According to Mr. E. Gait Kacharies might have given the name of the district as Cachar after their name. There is also another possibility that Bengalis of Sylhet district named the district as 'Kachar' which in Sylhetee is a stretch of land at the foot of a mountain

or on the bank of a river. It seems to be very difficult to search for the origin of the name. 'Hedamba' was a very old name of Cachar.

The district Cachar constitutes the southernmost part of the state of Assam and is situated between the longitude 92°14 E to 93°16 E and latitudes 24°8 N to 25°8 N. Being in remote corner of India it covers an area of 3786.1 square kilometer. If we go for geographical, historical & ethnical study of Cachar it appears to be an extension of Gangetic Bengal. Two distinct parts, viz., North Cachar Hills which were a continuation of the Assam range or Meghalaya Plateau and Cachar Hills which constitutes the eastern range of the alluvial valley of Surma characterizes Cachar (Roy, 10). Cachar has a strategic importance in the political map of India being bounded by the international boundary of Bangladesh in the west. With North Cachar Hills District and Jaintia Hills District of Meghalaya on the north, Mizoram on the south, on the eastern part by Manipur and the west by Tripura and Sylhet district of Bangladesh, Cachar made its unique identity. Uptill 1989, the North Cachar Hill district was a Sub-division under the Cachar district and after that it gained an independent status of district of Assam. Similarly, Hailakandi was an integral part of Cachar district from 1832 to 1900. In 1989, it also got the status of an independent district covering an area of 1326 square kilometer. Each of the district is headed by Deputy Commissioner. The undivided Cachar district of Assam at present is composed of three districts – Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi.

3.3.1 Cachar District under British Regime:- In 1826 Assam came under the East India Company, which was the land of Ahom as a result of Burmese invasion. When in 1824 British attacked Burma, the Cachar king Gobinda Chandra approached for British help to reestablish his kingdom. In the same year by a treaty the British Government reinstated Gobinda Chandra and the Burmese were expelled by them. But in 1830, Cachar came under the British rule, because the assassination of Gobinda Chandra with the absence of his inheritor of the throne which was in accordance with the treaty executed in Badarpur in 1826. In 1832, the district of Cachar was put under the set up of State administration. Captain Fisher, who was in the Survey Department was appointed as Superintendent of Cachar and was controlled by the Governor General's Agent in

Assam. In 1874, Chief Commissioner's Province constituted Assam in the same year in September. The Sylhet district was incorporated into the new province after getting separated from Bengal. In 1905, incorporation of Assam occurred into the newly created Lieutenant Governor's province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. In 1912, after the partition of Bengal, Assam was again placed into the chief Commissioner's province and the status continued to 1921. In 1921, with the implementation of the new reform Act of 1919, Assam again received the status of a major province under a full-fledged Governor.

3.3.2 Cachar District After Independence:- Immediate before the partition of 1947, Assam constituted two valleys –the Brahmaputra and Surma Valley. Again, Sylhet and Cachar districts constituted Surma valley. As a result of partition, the Sylhet district was separated from India and amalgamated with the then East Pakistan to be known as Bangladesh later. With three and half thanas of Badarpur, Ratabari, Patherkandi and a part of Karimganj sparing only 709 square miles to form Karimganj Sub-division and became a part of Cachar district with a population of 2,91,320 numbers. In 1983 Karimganj was parted with Cachar and a separate Karimganj district was formed with an area of 1839 square kilometer.

The beauty as well as treasure of the Cachar district is high mountain ranges. The Barail Range appears to form a continuous wall along the north of the district connecting the north Manipur hills and the Khasi range which varies in height between 2500 to 6000 feet. The eastern boundary of the district formed by the famous Bhuban hills ranges between 700 to 3000 feet in height. Dense forest covers the Siddheswar, Duhalia and Patheria ranges. Low range hills are also there in the district with tertiary sandstone. The surfaces are composed of “tillas” which are usually isolated hills ranging from 50 feet to 200 feet and mainly composed of sand, clay and gravel layers.

3.3.3 Administrative Set-up : The Deputy Commissioner of the district is the overall in-charge of the administration of the entire district. He plays a multiple role in the district. For all Revenue related matters he acts as the collector, in case of maintenance of Law and Order and general administration he is the District Magistrate, District Election Officer in case of conducting of Election, as a Principal Census Officer while conducting Census and so on. To assist him in

looking after the administration of district there are Additional Deputy Commissioners, Sub-divisional Officers, Extra-Assistant Commissioners and other number of officers.

For the administrative purposes, the entire district is divided into two Sub-divisions: Silchar and Lakhipur. Again each Sub-division is divided into revenue circles under which there are Mouzas comprising revenue villages. There are 5 Revenue Circles ,viz., Katigorah, Silchar, Udarbond, Lakhipur and Sonai and 15 CD Blocks which comprises 1047 villages including 42 uninhabited villages in Cachar District. Silchar Revenue Circle is the most populous having 704465 persons while Udarbond is the least populous revenue circle, having 124090 persons in the district. Among the CD Blocks, Narsingpur CD Block has the highest number of population with 164286 whereas the lowest number of population is in Lakhipur CD Block comprising 48547. In Katigorah CD Blocks, there are highest number of inhabited villages whereas lowest number 24 is found in Silchar CD Block.

The number of towns, statutory towns and census towns in the district are 19, 2 and 17 respectively. Silchar (MB + OG) is the most populous with 178865 persons while Dudhpatil Pt-V (CT) is the smallest in population with 4121 persons. The largest village by population is Silcoorie Grant with 19637 persons under Barjalenga C.D. Block and the smallest village is Euback Punjee under Udarbond C.D. Block and Bhubannagar Pt-VIII under Palonghat C.D. Block with 5 persons each.

Total numbers of Anchalik Panchayat are 15 where there are 163 numbers of gaon panchayat in the district. There are three Agricultural Sub-divisions and 19 numbers of A.D.O. Circles. During the decade 2001-2011 the Cachar district has not gone through any jurisdictional change.

3.3.4 The River System:-The Barak is the main river of the district which rises on the Southern slopes of the lofty range of Nagaland and appears to be the northern boundary of Manipur state named as Kairong there. Then it flows to a South-West course to Tipaimukh and gets a sharp turn to north wards and continues as a boundary line between Cachar and Manipur for a large distance.

After the river Jiri joins with Barak again a turning takes the river again to the west ward and flows upto Bhanga near Badarpur with a roundabout course across the middle of the district. Within the district the river has 192km long route. The Barak is divided into two near Badarpur to Haritakar stretch – as the Surma flowing northwards to Sylhet in Bangladesh and Kushiara towards south touching Karimganj. There are many tributaries of Barak - Jiri, Chiri, Badri, Madhura, Jatinga in the North, Sonai and Katakhal in the south and are the principal tributaries. Whereas, Kushiara has only two tributaries-Longai and Singla. The Barak River flows through the plains portion. The tributaries are rainfed mainly and cause flood problems when precipitation occurs.

3.3.5 Climate of the District:-Excessive humidity is the characteristics of the district. Scorching heat is sometimes unbearable during the months of May to September. In May, normally rainy season starts and continues till October. Now-a-days the rainfall becomes scanty in the district as in other parts of the Assam and NER due to large scale climate change and environmental degradation. During rainy season, heavy shower with moist air perpetuates the oppressive weather. Hailstorm and thunder-shower are the two frequent happenings of the district with many more casualties, which were earlier not a very recurrent one accepting March-April period. The period-November to February is normally a cool one. The temperature of summer with humid and moist air though an irritating phenomenon but provides an ideal condition for the cultivation of rice, tea and different types of crops. The average rainfall of the district is 2800 m.m. Relative humidity of the district ranges between Minimum 65-70% and Maximum 90-95%. Temperature recorded by the district shows a minimum of 9-11°C to a maximum of 35-37°C.

3.3.6 Natural Resources : Natural Resources of the district consists of hillocks, rivers, marshy lands and forests with various wild animals and forest products. Forest covers almost 141768 Ha of land in the district. Ceaseless deforestation has led to rapid depletion of the forests resources. There has been a concomitant decline in the annual out-turn of forests product. The forest contains valuable timbers like Sundi, Gamari, Cham, Tula, Rata, Ramdala, Lalpad, etc. besides cane thatches, bamboo, stanstone etc. Cane and bamboo are used in various forest

based cottage and small scale industries for the manufacture of furniture, mats, baskets, curtains and other household articles. Sand stones are used in local construction works. Bamboo is largely used in paper mill at Panchgram though the shortages of bamboo now-a-days has created problem for paper mill in production process. Systematic exploration of oil and natural gas are done by ONGC in the Cachar basin. In Adamtilla, the gas based power generation has somehow eased the problem of the district. Yet, these resources are yet to be fully explored and assessed and requires huge investment for full commercial uses.

3.3.7 Land Situation : Apart from forest land substantial part of the total district is occupied by different land situation. 43295 Ha of land is put to non-agricultural uses and 41701 Ha is put to barren tract and uncultivable land. 84960 Ha of land is not available for cultivation. Other uncultivable land excluding fallow land accrues to 22574 Ha. Permanent pasture and grazing land accounts to 2600 Ha. Land under miscellaneous trees, groves etc. goes to 17937 Ha. Cultivable waste land is under 2037 Ha. Fallow land, fallow land other than current fallow and current fallow accounts to 13013 Ha, 6071 Ha and 6942 Ha respectively.

3.3.8 Demographic Features : According to the 2011 census, the population figure of the district is 1736617 as against the total population of 31205576 of Assam which represents 5.56% of the total population of the state. The Table 3.12 also shows the population figure for the same period in the state. Increase in the population is visible from the Table in the 10 years both in the District as well as in the State. The number of male population are 886284 and that of female are 850333. The rural-urban scenario is also recorded in the Table in both 2001 and 2011 Census. Number of population living in urban area of the district are 3,15,464 against the total population of urban area of the state as 4,398,542. Number of population living in rural area of the district are 1,421,153 as against the total 26807034 of rural population of the district. Among the three districts of Barak Valley Cachar has the highest population followed by Karimganj (1228686) and Hailakandi (659296). It has increased in 2011 census than that of 2001 census.

Table : 3.12

Demographic Feature of Cachar District

Year	Population						Population				Population Density (Per Sq.Km.)		Decadal Growth Rate (%)		Sex Ratio (Female per 1000 male)	
	Cachar			Assam			Cachar		Assam		Cachar	Assam	Cachar	Assam	Cachar	Assam
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban						
2001	1444921	743042	701879	2665528	13777037	12878491	1243534	201387	23216288	3439240	382	340	18.89	18.92	945	935
2011	1736617	886284	850333	31205576	15939443	15266133	1421153	315464	26807034	4398542	459	398	20.19	17.07	959	958

Source : * Statistical Hand Book, Assam, 2014

** Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

From the available data of the Census Report 2011, the density of population in Cachar district is 459 per square kilometer, which was 382 in 2001. Highest population density is in Kamrup Metro 1313 and lowest in Dima Hasao 44 according to the 2011 Census Report. Decadal Growth Rate in Cachar in 2011 is 20.19 which was 18.89 in 2001 census. In the same time period decadal growth rate in the state was 17.07 and 18.92. For the state growth rate has decreased whereas for the district it has increased. The Sex Ratio expressed in Females per 1000 Males is 959 in 2011 which 945 in 2001 census and shows an increment over the decade. In the same time period the ratio has increased in the state also. The SC and ST population in the district according to 2011 Census are 264897 and 17569 respectively.

3.3.9 Population of children (0-6) yrs in the District: Table 3.13 Shows the population of children (0-6) year of age group for the year 2001 and 2011.1 in

2011 census total children in the age group of 0-6 yrs are 256774 which has increased than the 2001 census fig (229219). The percentage of children of this age group to total children is 1479 which has decreased than the percentage of children in 2001. The census 2011 has recorded the no of male children of 0-6 yrs as 131417 and that of female 125357. The rural and urban children of age group 0-6 yrs in the district are 222673 and 34101 according to the 2011 census. Number of urban children are less than the rural children. The sex-ratio in this age group is 959 in 2011 census which is less than the 2001 census figure.

Table: 3.13

Population of Children (0-6) years in the District

Population		Year	Population T	Percentage to total Population	Sex Ratio	Population	
Male	Female					Rural	Urban
NA	NA	2001	229219	15:86	961	NA	NA
131417	125357	2011	256774	11.79	959	22673	34101

Source : * Hand Book, Assam, 2014

** Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.3.10 Literacy Rate : Literacy rate in Cachar district is shown in following Table : 3.14. The literacy rate according to 2011 Census Cachar preferred better as against the state performance. In Assam the literacy rate is found to be 72.19 percent which includes male 77.85 percent and female 66.27 percent in 2011. In the district the total literacy rate is 87.39 percent. The percentage of male literacy 9.29 and female literacy is 84.44 in case of the district. Both the male and female literacy is quite high than the state literacy rate. The rural and urban literacy rate is recorded in the Table : 3.14 for the state. This rural urban differential is also quite high for the district. The percentage of literacy for rural population is 77.08 and that of urban is 87.39. in the district. For the state the 2011 census shows that rural literacy rate is less than the district rate. But in case of urban literacy the state is showing higher literacy (88.47) rate than the district (87.39)

Table : 3.14

Literacy Rate (2011 Census)

State / District	Literacy Rate (%)	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total
Assam	72.19	77.85	66.27	69.34	88.47	78.91
Cachar	87.39	90.29	84.44	77.08	87.39	82.24

Source : * Statistical Hand Book, Assam, 2014

** Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.3.11 Population Below Poverty Line : Using TENDULKAR Methodology (Poverty Headcount Ratio) the Table :3.15 shows the Population Below Poverty Line (BPL) of the state and the district.

Table : 3.15

Percentage of Population Below Poverty Line (2011-12)

Area	Poverty Headcount Ratio		
	Rural	Urban	Combined
Assam	33.89	20.49	31.98
Cachar	NA	NA	NA

Source : Statistical Hand Book, Assam, 2014

3.3.12 Food Security of Cachar : The situation of food security is assessed with all its three components – food availability, food accessibility and food utilization. The following writings will discuss all three components with regard to food security in the study area with respect to available data.

3.4 Food Availability : The availability of food grains to the households level is directly related to the purchase of food by the households the production at the household level, food stock, in kind wages transfer of food etc. Macro level aspect of food availability have an important impact on food security of the household. The availability of food grains through Public Distribution System from Central pool is also affecting the household level food security.

Table : 3.16

Target and Achievement of Crops in Cachar

Crop	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	Physical Target of Production ('000 kg)	Achievement ('000 kg)	Physical Target of Production ('000 kg)	Achievement ('000 kg)	Physical Target of Production ('000 kg)	Achievement ('000 kg)
Rabi Cereals						
1. Wheat	150	128	126	168	243	100
2. Summer Paddy	35300	21126	34530	6448	31715	14228
3. Rabi Maize	285	50	76	50	135	49
Rabi Pulses	2743	1679	1403	814	2711	1574
Rabi Oilseed Crop	1735	1476	NA	NA	2276	1375
Kharif Crops	NA	NA	234631	230037	251350	216939

Source : District Agriculture Office, Cachar.

The Table : 3.16 shows the targets & achievements of food grain production for three consecutive years : 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 respectively. For the Rabi Cereals all three years could not achieve the targeted production. No individual cereal could reach the level of production set as target. Total amount of Rabi pulses for the year 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 also register a lower level of production than target of production. In 2008-09 the target was 2473 thousand kg against which the physical production achieved is 1679 thousand kg. In 2009-10 the target was 1403 and achievement was 814 expressed in '000 kg. In 2010-11 the target and physical achievement was 2711 and 1574 in thousand kg respectively. Total oilseed production for 2008-09 on 2010-11 physical achievement could not keep pace with the targeted production. 2009-10 data for Rabi Oilseeds are not available.

This record of production clearly shows the food availability of the district and its status. Insecurity in respect of food availability component is easily identifiable in the district. The target of food grain production or requirement of food grain has been estimated on the basis of the increase in the number of population in the district on the basis of the 2001 Census data, because 2011 Census data was not collected and it was not available during the study. The district agriculture department have taken all its effort to increase the production requirement, so that the target is achieved and availability of food can be made to the households in the district. The target of food grain production or requirement of food grain has been estimated on the basis of the increase in the number of population in the district and 2001 census data is considered because 2011 census data was not available during the study. The district agriculture department have taken all its effect to increase the production requirement, so that the target is achieved and availability of food can be made to households. Some of the important food crops produced in the district is shown in Table : 3.17. This Table : 3.17 showed the production of crop for three consecutive years : 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11. The production cereal crop included autumn paddy winter paddy, summer paddy, wheat maize, other cereal and small millets has in 2009-10 and again increased in 2010-11. Pulse crop production has decreased in 2010-11. The same thing happened in

oilseed production. The spice has increased its production. Tuber crop registered a decrease in production in 2010-11. Fruit crop showed a continuous increase. Kharif vegetable registered increased growth pattern in production. Rabi vegetables could not maintain the increase in production in 2009-10. Sugarcane production decreased in 2010-11.

Table : 3.17

Food Crops Production in the District

Name of Crop	Production ('000 kg)		
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Cereal Crop	234837	227222	225482
Pulse Crop	1765	1912	1213
Oilseed Crop	1476	1431	1375
Spice Crop	2936	3152	3355
Tuber Crop	13129	16265	849
Fruit Crop	87361	89031	94435
Kharif Vegetable	50236	50343	65916
Rabi Vegetables	90354	90177	143601
Sugarcane	6668	9401	5762

Source : District Agriculture office, Cachar.

3.4.1 Issue of Food-grains through Food Corporation of India (FCI) :

The Table : 3.18 shows the issue of food grains in the district by FCI for DC, Cachar.

Table : 3.18**Issue of Food Grains**

Foodgrain	Issue (Qtls)			
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Wheat	520998.15	690175.25	589170.80	642090.15
Rice	1840560.50	2430250.70	2319120.60	2229210.75
Sugar	265460.50	284160.70	244140.90	263255.50

Source : District Office of FCI, Cachar.

After June 2013, issue of sugar has been stopped, only rice and wheat are in distribution.

3.5 Food Access : Any household's Food access depends on the purchasing capacity of the household. The purchasing capacity on other hand depends on the income source of the household and it is related to the employment status of the population.

3.5.1 Employment Status : The Table : 3.19 shows the employment growth scenario of the district and is shown for the year 2013 (Sixth Economic Census) as compared to 2005 (Fifth Economic Census)

Table : 3.19**Employment Growth Scenario**

Area	Growth in Employment		
	Rural	Urban	Combined
Cachar	109.50	23.95	81.67
Assam	85.55	65.11	78.84

Source : Economic Survey, Assam 2014-15.

This Table : 3.19 shows that rural employment growth is more than 85.00 percent than in urban area in the district. This may be due to government's different employment gurante schemes for the rural people. In the state as a whole urban area shows more growth. The combined growth rate in employment is more in the district (81.67 percent) than the state (78.84 percent).

3.5.2 Physical Achievement of MGNREGA (2013-14) : The MGNREGA employment generated I 2013-14 have been registered in lakh Mandays and is presented in the following Table : 3.20

Table : 3.20

Physical Achievement of MGNREGA (2013-14)

Area	Employment Generated (Lakh Mandays)				
	SC	ST	Others	Total	Women
Cachar	53228	9662	670768	733658	110643
Assam	1923772	4817517	23105883	29847172	7387422

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.5.3 Main Workers by Category of Economic Activities : District level main workers distribution according to economic activities are categorized in the Table 3.21 :

Table 3.21

Distribution of Workers by Category of Economic Activities

Area	Main workers			Cultivators			Agricultural Workers			Household Industries workers			Other Workers		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Assam	7034642	1652481	8687123	2698384	440170	3138564	705306	197988	903294	146566	95505	242071	3484386	616616	4403204
Cachar	395681	75578	471259	95599	8696	104295	31159	6045	37204	6707	4519	11226	262216	56216	318834

Source : Basic Statistic of NE Region, 2015

3.5 Institutional Finance :

Banking : The important growth fundamental for the economy of a country or a state is the financial system. A well structured and efficient network of financial institutions helps to boost economic growth. Banks are playing an important role in sustaining economic development by mobilizing deposits and credits. More and more branches are opened for greater coverage under institutional finance. The expansion of banking facilities in the state over the years augmented not only in respect of volume of deposits but also in respect of disbursement of credit. The Table :3.22 presents the credit deposit ratio in the state and in the district.

Table : 3.22**Credit Deposit Ratio**

Area	In percent (as on March)				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cachar	36.7	33.4	33.8	33.2	35.0
Assam	37.0	35.6	37.3	36.8	37.3

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014

For five consecutive years the credit deposit ratio has been presented in the Table : 3.22 . In the district the ratio has decreased except in 2014 (35.0). In the state the ratio fluctuated in every consecutive year. The aggregate deposit (Table:3.23) with scheduled commercial banks in Assam, which was Rs.77730 crore in March, 2013, has increased to Rs.85069 crore in March, 2014.

Table : 3.23**Credit Deposit Growth in Scheduled Commercial Banks**

Area	Aggregate Deposit		Per-capita Deposit		Credit			
					Aggregate		PC	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
Assam	77730	85069	24913	27266	28576		9159	10164

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.6 Food Utilization : It is the proper biological use of food, requiring a diet providing sufficient energy and essential nutrients, potable water, and adequate sanitation. Effective food utilization depends in large measure on knowledge within the household of food storage and processing techniques, basic principles of nutrition and proper childcare, and illness management. Food utilization is typically reflected in the nutritional status of an individual, is determined by the quantity and quality of dietary intake, general child care and feeding practices,

along with health status and its determinants. Poor infant care and feeding practices, inadequate access to or the poor quality of health services are also major determinants of poor health and nutrition. While important for its own sake as it directly influences human well-being, improved food utilization also has feedback effects, through its impact on the health and nutrition of household members, and therefore, on labor productivity and household income-earning potential.

3.5.1 Public Health (Sanitation and Drinking Water) : The Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) was launched by Govt. of India with reform initiatives in rural sanitation coverage and to bring about an improvement in the general quality of life of the rural people.

3.5.2 Amenities Available to Households : The 2011 Census have recorded the amenities available to the household. The district and are presented in the Table : 3.24

Table : 3.24

Amenities Available (in percent)

Area	No. of Households	Drinking Water		Sanitation Facilities within premises
		Within Premises	Near premises	
Cachar	379955	21.8	46.2	81.0
Assam	NA	54.8	26.7	64.9

Source: Basic Statistics, Assam, 2014

2011 Census shows the drinking water facility available to the household. Sanitation facilities is also recorded in terms of availability to the households in the Table 3.24. Drinking water available to the household within premises and in nearby areas are 21.8 and 46.2 percent respectively. Percentage of people collecting potable water from out side their premises are more. Sanitation facility

as available within own premises are 81.0 percent, and is a remarkable progress in this respect compared to state level status of percentage.

This project is renamed as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA). The target and achievement during the year 2013-14 are presented in Table : 3.25.

Table : 3.25
Target and Achievement of NBA in Assam

Project	Target	Achievement	Percentage of Achievement
Individual Household Latrine (BPL)	350000	124408	36
Individual Household Latrine (APL)	250000	36194	14
School Toilet	1770	631	36
Anganwadi Toilet	5810	195	3

Source : Chief Engineer (PHE) Assam in Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

Table : 3.26

No. of Habitations / Villages Providing with Drinking Water Facilities

Area	Habitation Covered				Habitation as on 01.04.2014			Habitation with functioning drinking water supply facility
	2013-14				Uncovered	Quality Affected	Fully covered	
	Total	Uncovered	Quality affected	Fully covered				
Cachar	2689	150	1	51	386	6	2594	2831
Assam	86976	4144	2408	6552	35214	10684	41990	73342

Source : Basic Statistics, Assam, 2014

3.6.3 Nutritional Status of Individual: Severity in malnutrition occurs as a preliminary disorder in case of children, adolescents group and in case of adults in extremities of absence of necessities and famine like situation. In case of depending also it may happen when vulnerability is there in case of sick, old people, child and women. Adolescents and adults affected by malnutrition are susceptible to diseases. The nutrition status of an individual is affected by many underlying factors – such as availability of food, care giving service of mother to her child, proper health and sanitation environment. Any minimization of a factor may drastically affect the overall nutrition status of an individual. Intra-household inequalities in gender also affects the nutrition status of a child.

3.6.4 Nutrition Status of Children in Assam : Here, nutritional status measurement includes anthropometric characteristic such as height, weight etc. for children under 5 years of age, Z-score details are half of the Children (54%) under 5 years age are stunted, or too short for their age, which indicates that they have been undernourished for some time. Children’s nutritional status in Assam has improved in NFHS-3 than NFHS-2 except in case of underweight. A very little increase is their in case of underweight children (low weight for age).

Table : 3.27

Percentage of Children Under Three Years

Area	NFHS – 2 (%)			NFHS – 3 (%)		
	Stunted	Wasted	Under Weight	Stunted	Wasted	Under Weight
Assam	54	19	35	41	17	36
Cachar	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source : National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), India

3.6.5 Child Health Indicator in Assam (2013) : The health indicators released by RGI shows under five mortality in Assam as very high than all India level. Neo Natal Mortality, Infant Mortality, Crude Birth Rate and Crude Death Rate all are recorded in Table :3.28. The steps taken by health care is reflected in the NNM which has decreased for last few years.

Table : 3.28

Child Health Indicator (2013)

Activity	Total		Rural		Urban	
	Assam	India	Assam	India	Assam	India
Crude Birth Rate	22.4	21.4	23.5	22.9	15.4	17.3
Crude Death Rate	7.8	7.0	8.2	7.5	5.6	5.6
IMR	54	40	56	44	32	27
Neo Natal_MR	27	28	29	31	10	15
Under 5 yrs. of age MR	73	49	77	55	34	29

Source : Economic Survey, Assam, 2014-15

3.6.6 Nutritional Status in Adult : Adults of age 15-49 in Assam suffer mostly from undernutrition, but overweight and obesity are also becoming a problem. One third of adults (15-49) years are too thin. Only 56 percent of women and 59 percent of men are at a healthy weight for their height in Assam.

3.6.7 Body Mass Index (BMI) : BMI is the indicator of health in adult where, height in meter

square is divided by body weight in kg. gives the BMI which is a ratio and is expressed in number.

Table : 3.29**Nutritional Status of Adults (in Assam)**

Age	Body Mass Index (BMI) in Kg/m ²									
	Women					Men				
	<18.5	<17.0	≥25.0	≥30.0	Nos.	<18.5	<17.0	≥25.0	≥30.0	Nos.
	Total thin	Moderately Severely	Overweight	Obese		Total thin	Moderately Severely	Overweight	Obese	
15-19	41.9	15.4	1.3	0.2	616	49.0	19.3	1.2	0.0	209
20-29	37.4	14.9	5.4	0.4	1219	39.4	14.1	3.3	0.5	375
30-39	31.8	14.7	11.3	1.2	1020	26.0	8.4	7.1	0.9	339
40-49	37.3	16.3	13.7	2.2	566	31.6	9.9	7.8	0.0	260

Source : National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), India